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# IN XANADU: A FANTASY OF THE EXPOSITION

ELLEN COIT ELLIOTT

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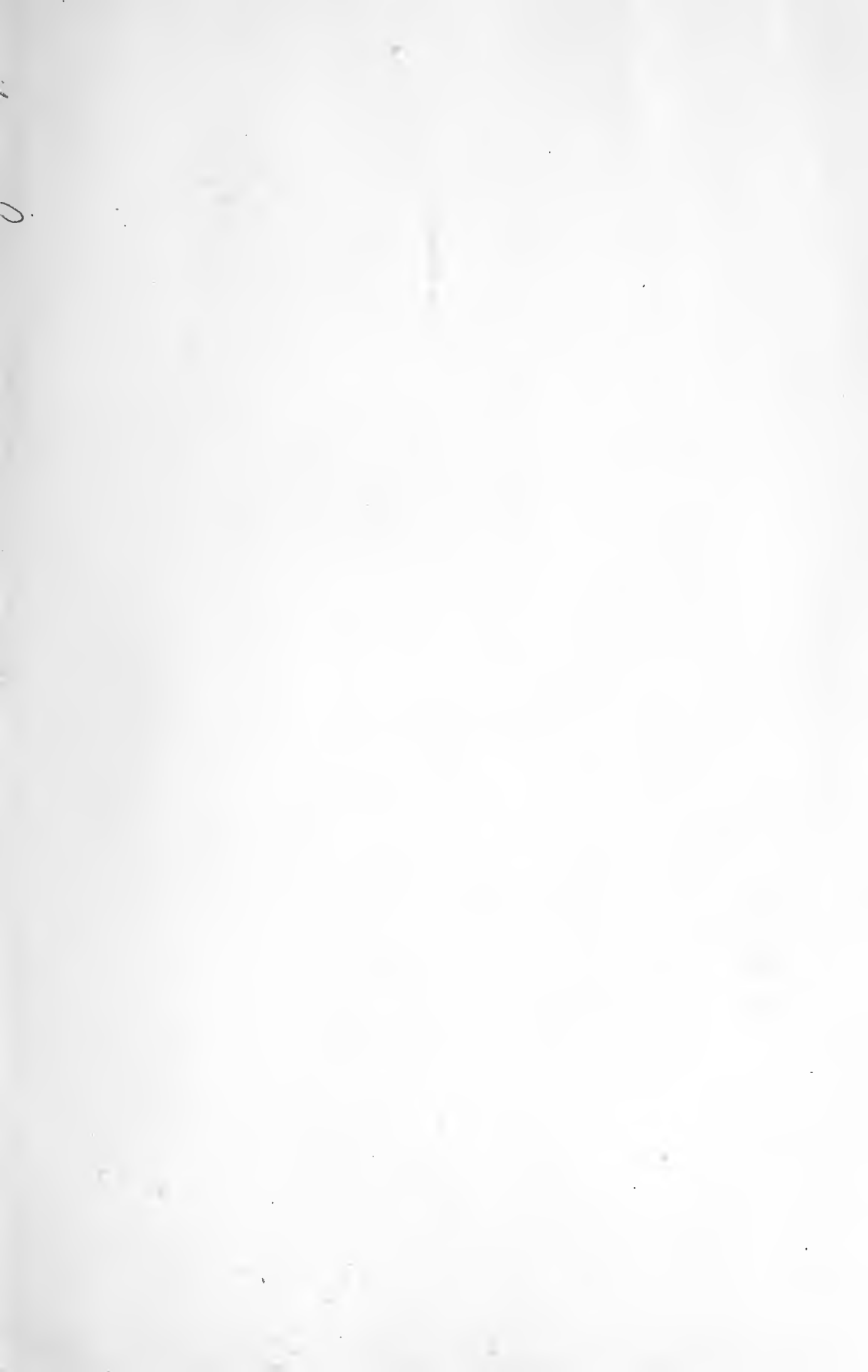
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I

THE DREAM

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan

A stately pleasure-dome decree ;

It vanished or ever it began :

A singer glimpsed it in a vision

And then the miracle of rare device,

The sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice,

The greenery enfolded spots, the fields elysian,

Sank to a sunless sea.

*The sighs of mourners breathe across the courts*

*And faint along the aisles of Xanadu ;*

*The lost, the lost is found, the vision lives again,*

*But, sweet and fleeting, vanishes anew.*

Oh swarthy-golden walls and tawny towers,

Girt with green trees and mauve and amber flowers ;

Oh waters in the gardens where you play,

Flowing down from ancient rivers :

Alph, and four that freshened Eden

Once, an elder day !

How my willing heart receives you !

Now again my soul believes you,

Certain you will stay.

Oh the glades where airy sprites and fancies,  
    Dreams that never had a name, elusive thought,  
Stand revealed in the merry light that dances  
    Across the bronze and marble where they're caught!  
Oh the pools! My bubble-domes of pleasure  
    Thrill and drown in glassy deeps of sunny blue.  
Birds and fountains sing and lisp a braided measure,  
Moths and poets loiter after honey-dew.  
    How my loving heart receives you!  
Now again I must believe you,  
    Certain you are true.



## II

### EMERALD AND ROSE

I paced a vaulted gallery at night;  
Attendant columns led me on my way;  
And lamps like giant pearls gave gentle light,  
Bathing the flushed cloister in a milky day,  
Jostling pigeons up aloft  
Dreamed with croonings feather-soft.  
Out beyond in the limpid gloom  
I saw dark trees and bushes loom.  
Soon the silence, as I paced,  
Thinned and water-babble laced  
Crisping o'er it; so I followed  
Where a rosy alcove hollowed.  
Burly columns, creamy white,  
Before the cave rose to the night  
And lifted for roof a starry sky,  
Blue with midnight's velvet dye.  
From the blushing rounded wall  
Broke an emerald waterfall,  
Dropped and plashed and rippled cool,  
Spread and rested in a pool.  
Oh the goblin water's sheen!  
Oh the emerald fire of green!

Wander mortal, wander sprite,  
Follow hearing, follow sight,  
Follow water, wind, and fire,  
Follow shadow, follow light!  
Toss and catch with lean Desire,  
Fancy free leads on tonight.

### III

#### COURT OF THE AGES

So fancy caught  
My sleeve and brought  
Me to a court embowered in orange trees.  
Eve was allured by such apples as these,  
And they hung in the groves of the Hesperides,  
And rapture and dolor they wrought.  
Sea-born columns round them loom—  
As when along the shore the spume,  
Scudding ahead of the wave, escapes,  
And, yellow and empty, in idle shapes  
Quivers, and stays where it is blown—  
So, fretted into airy grace,  
The foamy shafts of mellow stone  
Stand round about the place  
Guarding azure porticoes  
And shadowed coigns of pictured space;  
And like the drifts  
Of tumbled cliffs  
The sculptured tower lightly lifts  
    On high,  
Breaking to tender minarets  
    Against the sky.

And there in the midst the round earth glows,  
Lazily swimming,  
Flushing, dimming,  
Hazily swaddled in vapor of rose.  
It is the pristine world afloat  
In mist primeval, fog remote,  
And the waters beneath that glow and fade  
Are the sea before the land was made.

'Twixt primal sea and fruit of desire  
The gods have set the flower of fire.  
It burgeons red in bowls of stone,  
From spewing serpents the flame is blown,  
And the ghostly daughter  
Of fire and water  
    Trails  
Her light veils  
    Over skies star-sown.

## IV

### THE GREAT SIREN

A sound comes echoing, startling, low,  
Billowing mellowly, hark to it grow  
And over the courts roll to and fro.  
Swelling, spreading, aspiring, it wails,  
Louder, thinner, wilder it trails.  
Through resounding porches high  
Now it shrieks and rends the sky.  
Now its fury spent it falls,  
Note by note its plaint recalls,  
Now it shudders to a groan,  
Lower, mellower, to a moan,  
Long drawn out, a keening cry!

*Have we heard Pan die?*

# V

## THE RISING SUN AND DESCENDING NIGHT

Two stand at the portals of the day:  
 Youth the man to heaven upspringing  
 Youth the woman heaven down-bringing,  
 Joy and Love are they.

*He—*

Wake, my soul, 'tis morning,  
     Greet, oh greet, the sun!  
 Sing! Sing! Shout and sing!  
     Day is begun!  
 Joy of dawn! Joy of wings!  
     Joy of song and flight!  
 Take me! Fill me! Lose me in thee,  
     Golden, perfumed Light!  
 Joy of dawn! Joy of wings, Joy! Joy! Joy!

*She—*

Rest, my heart, the evening comes,  
     Lulla, lullaby.  
 Slumber safe, weary earth,  
     Who should watch but I?  
 Hush, my child, darkness soft  
     For a cover wrap thee,  
 Love and stillness be thy pillow,  
     Comfort thee and hap thee.  
 Love, lulla, lullaby, love, love, love.

Two were set on that first day,  
     The evening and the morn,  
 When God came from starry spaces  
     And a new star was born.  
 So they guard each sleep, each waking,  
     Love and Joy are they.

## VI

### THE LAGOON

When sinks the sun and leaves Descending Night  
    To droop and brood above the dark lagoon,  
Forth from his grassy covert slips a swan  
    And preens his feathers by the crescent moon.  
The wild broom kisses the column's fluted splendor  
    And breathes its spicy perfume to the night,  
Beneath the acacia's netted boughs the tender  
    Muse bends o'er her trove in gleaming white,  
And down upon her marble beauty falls—  
    Upon the portals green as sea-caves  
    And the ivory walls—  
A radiance as soft as ancient noons,  
    A radiance of old remembered light.

Old as oblivion are these clustered pillars,  
    Set for a temple in a forgotten day,  
'Twas then the Styx along this fragrant margin,  
    Flowed dim and cool and soundless on its way.  
Back, backward through the glimmering corridors,  
Along the water, in the storied gloom,  
    Past cypress bowers  
    And sweet broom flowers,  
My yearning spirit gropes to find its home.







## VII

### BANNERS IN THE SUN

Proudly float, flutter and float,  
    A hundred banners athwart the blue!  
Lift your ranks, you hundred staves,  
    Carry them tall and true.  
Proudly float, flutter and float,  
    Banners in the sun.  
March along, you shining staves,  
    Flaunt them every one.  
Russet pennons fly to the breeze,  
    Red stream out to the sun,  
Color a-wing on the bright sea-wind,  
With turret and cornice and dome entwined,  
    Breaking away, returning aswirl,  
Tremble and flash and run;  
    Flutter and float, flutter and curl,  
Free to the wind and the sun.

## VIII

### FAERY

There's a fountain in the Court of Fairy Tales:  
Beauty thrones upon the Beast and water pours,  
Down it slips and slides and shivers,  
O'er the circling brim it quivers,  
Thin as melting ice in spring,  
Clear as sheets of elfin glass,  
Drops in crystal filigree,  
And flashes in the basin as you pass.

Curving curbs the waters stay,  
Wrought with figures ashen-grey.  
A lion walks around the rim,  
An ape forever following him,  
And after them a kindly pair,  
A panther and a dancing bear.  
And whoso looks the court about  
Sees other lions gazing out  
Across the harmless pansy beds.  
Great and shaggy are their heads;  
They rest at ease upon their paws,  
With garlands in their smiling jaws.  
And poised on the tip of the dappled tower  
A sunlit Fairy waits the magic hour.

IX

YOUNG DIANA

Grace of the crescent has young Dian,  
    Spurning the globe with her tiptoe tread,  
    Gazing along where the arrow sped  
For a little white rabbit that ran.

Girlish and wanton is young Dian,  
    Slender and lithe as a reed in the wind;  
    Fast in her heart that arrow she'll find  
When her true lover grows to a man.

X

THE BOWMAN

High! So high!  
Endless adventure in thy questing eyes!  
Over the sea thine arrow flies  
Into the Western skies,  
    The sun, the great Pied Piper, following.  
Round and round  
Thy column is with a spiral wound.  
Never did a ship before  
Aspire to such exalted shore.  
Full the sail and true the mast,  
And to the crown  
    *(It winds and winds)*  
Comes the ship at last.

All thy ships come surely in,  
    Bowman, yet thy lifted sight  
Marketh not their homeward sailing,  
    But the arrow's flight  
Far beyond the golden distance,  
    Following the sun into the night.

## XI

### TWILIGHT

The fervent sun was loth to go  
Because the tower glittered so.

My Lord the Sun, he picked them out:  
The emerald with the ruby married,  
The topaz in the opal buried,  
The crystal and the amethyst,—  
They winked and sparkled, with smile and flout,  
And every one My Lord Sun kissed.  
Gleam and good night and now he has gone,  
And after him the rainbow drawn.

Secret and cool the pearl fog drifts  
Up from the sea and across the tower,  
Round sleeping palaces folds and lifts,  
Muffles and shifts in the spectral bower.  
Delicate partners, the mist and the breeze  
Weave their still measures through colonnades,  
In and out among looming trees  
And wavering, shadowy, silent glades,  
Then one, then two, a jeweled blur  
Where lights awake and glow through gossamer.

## XII

### THE SOUL PROTESTS

*Yet mourn the grieving voices through the halls  
And on the sunny air a shadow falls:*

*But sunsets fade, but April perishes.  
The rose-leaf babe, the hawthorne flower,  
The warm brown tresses of the maid,  
Nest in the heart for one sweet hour,  
Then leave bereft the soul that cherishes.  
So vanished Kubla's dream in Xanadu,  
So by the western ocean fades our dream.*

*Charm me a charm to hold it fast!  
Forge me a sword its death to slay!  
Dream me a dream to live and last!  
Catch me the wind ere it flies away!*

### XIII

#### THE ANSWER

Can you net the lights and darks that in the water play?  
Or bring, to sing your babe to sleep, the soughing of the pine?  
Gather into lanterns the holy Milky Way?  
Or round about your shoulders wrap the white moonshine?

The hills of early morning hear her silver laugh and call,  
She couches in the dusky fields beneath the evening star;  
Catch who can! How graciously she smiles, a gentle thrall!  
Then drops her lovely bonds and spreads her wings and floats afar

Beauty has a thousand homes, she is captive never:  
Daughter of eternity she will not cabined be.  
A word she hath, a look she hath, joy she hath forever,  
When she shines for Kubla Khan or gleams in dreams for me.

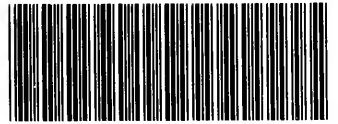
We whimper like a sleeping child lest fairy Xanadu  
Should once again, as once before, vanish beside the sea;  
We wake and know the bubble gone, yet all the glory true,  
And Beauty leading o'er the waves—a Flying Victory.







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